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CITY OF CORONADO

OPEN SPACE ELEMENT

ADOPTED

November 15,1994

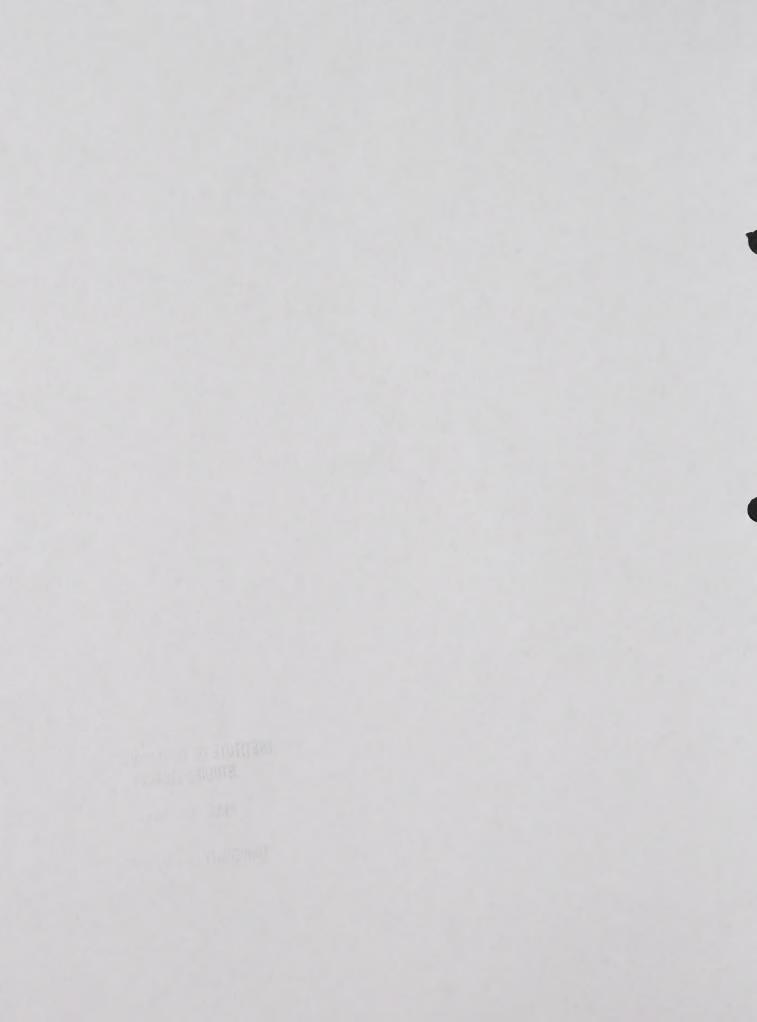
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Foreword

The City of Coronado is required by State law since 1973 to have within its General Plan Policy Document an Open Space Element. Government Code Sections 65302 (e) and 65560 require that the Open Space Element plan for the comprehensive and long range preservation and conservation of open space land. The policies set forth within this element strive to maintain and preserve the City's existing open space resources.

In the formulation of this element, the following questions were considered:

- 1. Where do significant open space areas exist in Coronado?
- 2. How should open space areas significant for recreation, scenic, historic, or cultural reasons be preserved?
- 3. How should open space areas significant for the preservation of natural and biological areas be preserved, maintained, and enhanced?
- 4. How should open space areas significant for public health and safety reasons be preserved and maintained?

By its very statutory nature, the issues addressed within the Open Space Element are broad in scope. Due to this, open space issues overlap and intertwine with issues that are also addressed and discussed within other elements in the City of Coronado General Plan Policy Document. When applicable, the user of this element will be referred to other elements that deal with similar and related problems, issues, and opportunities.

Sources quoted are listed in the Open Space Element's Bibliography on page II-M11 and are referenced in the following manner:

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City of Coronado

Open Space Element

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Introduction

Open Space is important to Coronado for recreation, preservation and enhancement of aesthetic view sheds, the preservation and management of natural resources, and to a lesser extent, for public safety purposes.

Open Space land is defined as any parcel or area of land or water which is essentially devoted to an open space use. As required by state law, the City of Coronado must address open space for the preservation of natural resources, for outdoor recreation, for the managed production of natural resources, and for public health and safety purposes.

The Open Space Element will address each of these areas as they apply to the City of Coronado and will serve the purpose of providing goals and policies that will enable the City to preserve and enhance existing open spaces and provide its citizens with the opportunity to enjoy these valuable resources.

The City of Coronado is unique in character and image partly because of geographical location. The City is on a peninsula, surrounded by San Diego Bay and the Pacific Ocean, offers its residents and visitors scenic vistas as well as opportunities to use its many water areas, beaches, and parks. The spatial relationships between the relatively pristine, undeveloped land that is apparent along the Silver Strand and the urbanized, nearly completely developed "village" and the "Cays" offer an extraordinary atmosphere to residents and visitors.

Opportunities for the City of Coronado to acquire large areas of open space are restricted due to its developed nature. Most of the open space that still exists is located along the Silver Strand, and includes the Naval Amphibious Base, the Silver Strand State Beach, and the Naval Radio Receiving Facility. This open space will most likely continue to be under State, Federal, or San Diego Unified Port Authority ownership for many years. Therefore, to be most effective in achieving its Open Space goals, the City must coordinate with these public agencies to enhance and preserve the existing open spaces, and should be alert to any opportunities that may allow acquisition of land that may be used for open space.

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Goals:

The Open Space goals of the City are:

- 1. To preserve and enhance or promote the preservation and enhancement of open space areas within the City for:
 - A. The purposes of active and passive outdoor recreation;
 - B. The conservation of the ocean and bay ecosystems, and those sensitive biological habitats supporting rare and/or endangered plants and wildlife;
 - C. The productivity of ocean and bay fisheries and aquaculture;
 - D. The protection of public health and safety; and
 - E. The aesthetic and psychological benefits of scenic corridors and view sheds located throughout the City.
- 2. To investigate possible acquisition of land that can be maintained or used for open space.
- 3. To provide public access when appropriate to open space areas.
- 4. To preserve and maintain for public benefit beaches and salt ponds.

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Aspects of Open Space

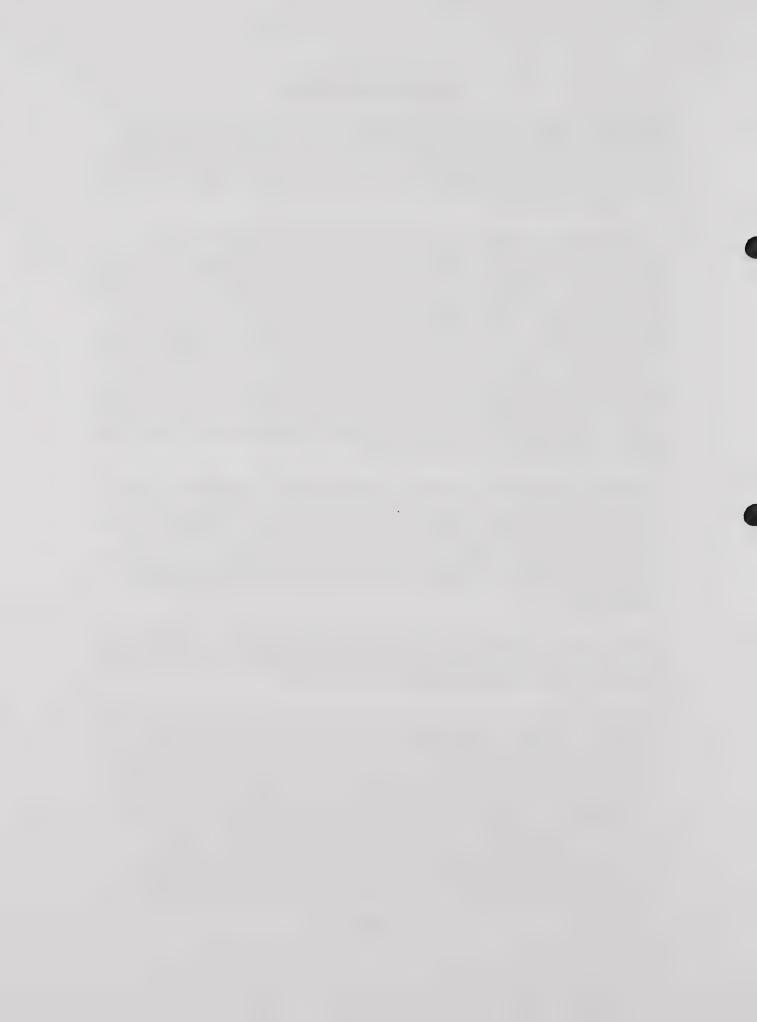
Open space used for outdoor recreation is important for meeting the community's recreation and cultural needs. Within the City of Coronado, such open space includes areas particularly suited for park and recreation purposes (parks, beaches, golf courses), and areas that connect major recreation and open-space reservations, such as trails and scenic highway corridors.

Excluding beaches and golf courses, there are 22 parks located within the City of Coronado, representing approximately 59 acres. Two of these parks, the Tidelands and the Old Ferry Landing are owned by the State of California and are under trusteeship of the San Diego Unified Port District. The majority of the City owned parks are classified as vest pocket parks, meaning the total acreage ranges up to 5 acres. The existence of parks is an important feature to the residents of the City of Coronado because they offer the opportunity for active and passive recreational activities as well as visual relief from the urbanized environment. In addition to these parks, residents are able to utilize 0.2 acres of bay beach located on the Naval Amphibious Base, and approximately 1,200 feet of ocean beach front property located at the south boundary of North Island Naval Air Station. For complete descriptions and locations of existing park facilities, please refer to the Recreation Element, pages II-C6 and II C15.

There are two ocean beaches available for public use within Coronado: the Coronado Municipal Beach and the Silver Strand State Beach. The Silver Strand State Beach is operated by the California Department of Parks and Recreation. Residents and visitors can also utilize San Diego Bay for recreational purposes. In Addition, some of the aforementioned parks provide access to bay beaches. These parks include a portion of the Silver Strand State Beach, Glorietta Bay Park, Tidelands Park, and the Old Ferry Landing Park.

Additional open space that is utilized for outdoor recreation includes the Municipal Golf Course, the Navy Golf Course located within North Island Naval Air Station for Navy personnel, as well as the Pacific Ocean and San Diego Bay.

The unique character of Coronado is partly due to the many locations throughout the city that provide scenic views. Driving along the State Scenic Highway 75 offers an individual the opportunity to enjoy pristine, beautiful, and relaxing, views of the Pacific Ocean, the San Diego Bay, the skyline of the City of San Diego, as well as landmarks within the city, such as the Hotel Del Coronado. Preservation of this important visual open space resource is facilitated by the designation of State Highway 75 as a scenic highway. This designation includes the Coronado Bridge as well as the portion of Highway 75 commonly known as the Silver Strand. The City of Coronado has implemented the General Plan Chapter O, Scenic Highway Element with a Scenic Highway Modifying Zone that serves the purpose of enhancing and preserving valuable visual resources.



The City of Coronado provides extensive bicycle/pedestrian routes that enable individuals recreational opportunities and the freedom to enjoy the psychologically soothing scenic vistas that are prevalent along the routes. The variety of bicycle/pedestrian paths, routes, and lanes link valuable open space and scenic corridors together with the urbanized setting of the village. For example, the bicycle paths along the Silver Strand offer views of San Diego Bay, the Coronado Bridge, and beaches. The bicycle and pedestrian path along the Municipal Golf Course and Tidelands Park also offer picturesque views of the Glorietta and San Diego Bay, the skyline of the City of San Diego, and of the Coronado Bridge. For a more inclusive description of these routes, please refer to the Circulation Element, Chapter E of the General Plan.

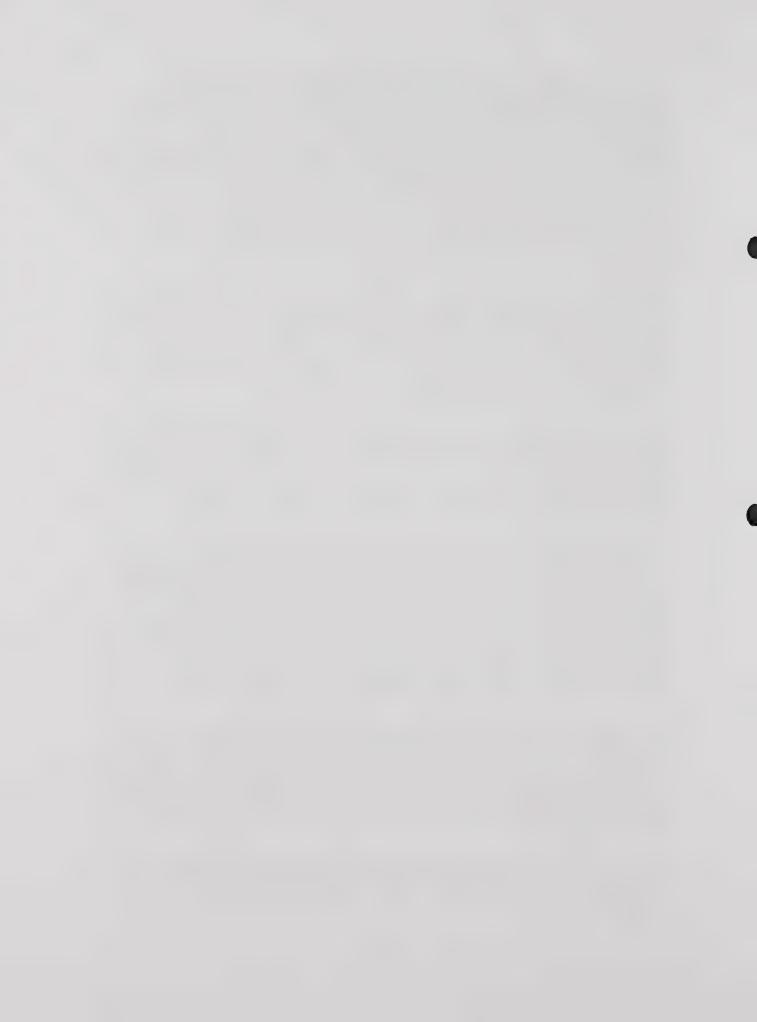
Open Space For The Preservation Of Natural Resources includes areas required for the preservation of plant and animal habitat and water resources, and areas required for ecological study purposes, bays, and coastal beaches. Within the city limits of Coronado, there are a number of biological communities that should be preserved, and where possible, enhanced. Due to the "built out" nature of the village, most of the areas that support biological resources are located along the Silver Strand.

The City has identified six important biological communities: Open Coast Sandy Beach, San Diego Bay, Coastal Strand, wetlands such as the Coastal Salt Marsh and Mudflats, and Disturbed Vegetation. While the user should refer to the Data Document /Master Environmental Assessment for a detailed discussion of each community, this portion of the Open Space Element will serve to highlight various sensitive habitats.

"Ecologically [the San Diego Bay] is considered one of the most important embayments of the California coast. [It] is a major spawning area for ocean and bay fish and is a significant part of the Pacific flyway for annual migratory birds which use the bay for feeding, nesting, or resting." ³ The Mudflat and Salt Marsh habitats are both present within San Diego Bay. Both of these coastal wetlands provide significant habitat to sensitive species. Mudflats provide food for numerous types of shorebirds, who are able to find food sources of crabs, clams, shrimps, snails, and worms that live there. Eelgrass beds that are located within the Bay are a unique habitat that shelter many types of fish and invertebrates and serve as a food source for migratory geese.

There are a number of threatened or endangered birds that frequent San Diego Bay. Among them are the endangered Peregrine Falcon and California Brown Pelican. The Peregrine Falcon is known to have a nest somewhere on the San Diego-Coronado Bridge, and the California Brown Pelican has been known to roost in the Saltworks. An aquatic endangered species worth noting is the Green Sea Turtle, which is a seasonal visitor to South San Diego Bay.

A very sensitive habitat exists within the City's South Bay Marine Biology Study Area. This area can be classified as a Coastal Salt Marsh community and is considered a valuable



coastal wetland. This salt marsh supports a variety of flora and fauna that serves as a habitat to threatened or endangered birds and plants. Among the endangered birds that use the marsh for nesting purposes are the Light-Footed Clapper Rail and the Belding's Savannah Sparrow. It should be noted, however, that there are a number of other sensitive birds that use the salt marsh as well as the Bay and the Mudflat communities. Sensitive plant species present at the salt marsh include the CNPS list 2¹ species of the San Diego Sunflower. The C2 federal candidate invertebrate Salt Marsh Wandering Skipper is also is present near the salt marsh. Historically, the endangered Salt Marsh Bird's Beak was known to the area; this species has recently been recorded at a smaller salt marsh located on the ocean-side property at the Navy Radio Receiving Facility property, but has not been known to occur at the South Bay Marine Biology Study Area for some time.

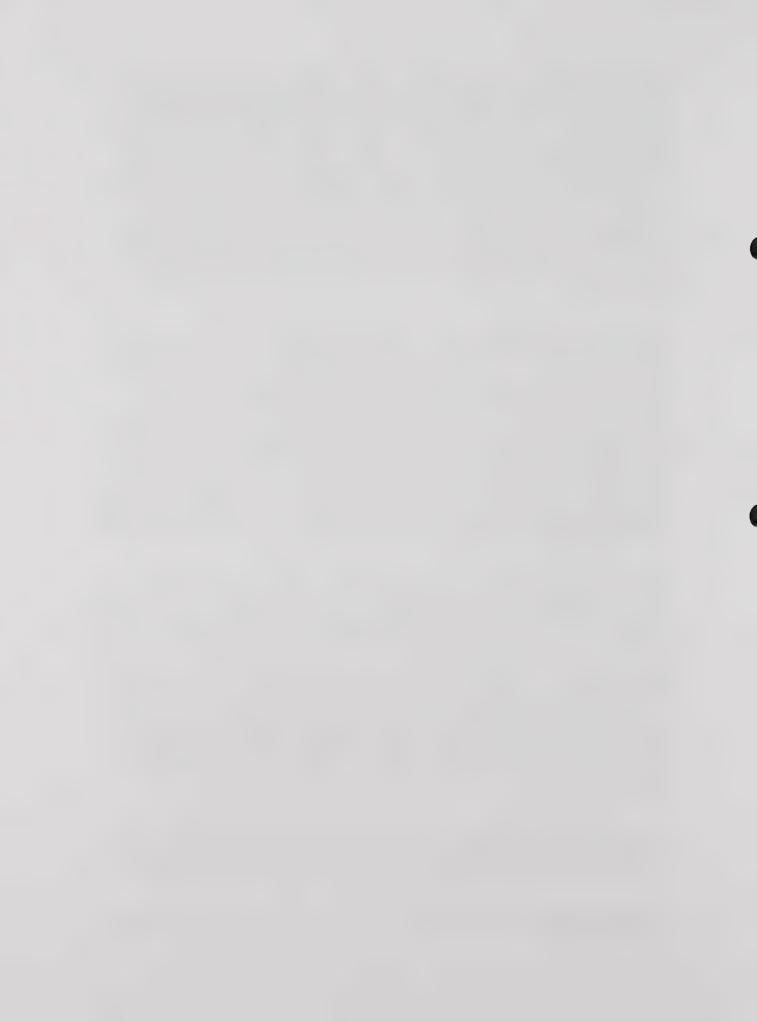
The Coastal Strand community is also a sensitive habitat that is found within the City. The Coastal Strand supports foredunes; the decline of this habitat within Southern California increases the ecological significance of the presence of the dunes. Dunes are located at the Silver Strand State Beach and on the Naval Radio Receiver Facility property. The foredunes support flora including but not limited to, beach and sand verbanas, salt bush, Sea Rocket, and the CNPS list 2 species of Nuttal's Lotus. Nutall's Lotus is also found among the ice plant and open areas on property at the Naval Radio Receiving Facility. The dunes provide habitat for the Globose Dune Beetle, Sand Dune Tiger beetle, and the Sand Beach Tiger Beetle-all C2 federal candidates for listing. The dunes also provide a refuge during high tide for such birds, among others, as Long-Billed Curlews, Semi-palmated Plovers, Sanderlings, Whimbrels, as well as the Western Snowy Plover and California Least Tern.

Two other important C2 federal candidate plant species, the Variegated Dudleya (Dudleya variegata) and the San Diego Barrel Cactus, (Ferocactus viridescens) are known to exist at the Naval Radio Receiving Facility property. These two plant species are not generally associated with the Coastal Strand; but more so with coastal sage scrub habitat.

The Open Coast Sandy Beach habitat is important because it provides nesting sites for the California Least Tern within the California Least Tern Preserve located at Delta Beach (on the Naval Amphibious Base) as well as within sensitive habitat areas designated at North Island Naval Air Station. The Western Snowy Plover, which is proposed for federal listing, uses (and has nested on) the sandy beaches of the Naval Amphibious Base and the Silver Strand State Beach. Also, sandy beaches provide habitat for numerous shorebirds.

Open Space for the managed production of resources includes areas required for recharge of ground water basins, bays that support commercial fisheries, forest and agricultural lands, and areas that contain mineral deposits. Within Coronado, mineral

¹California Native Plant Society, List 2 refers to plants that are considered rare or endangered in California but common elsewhere.



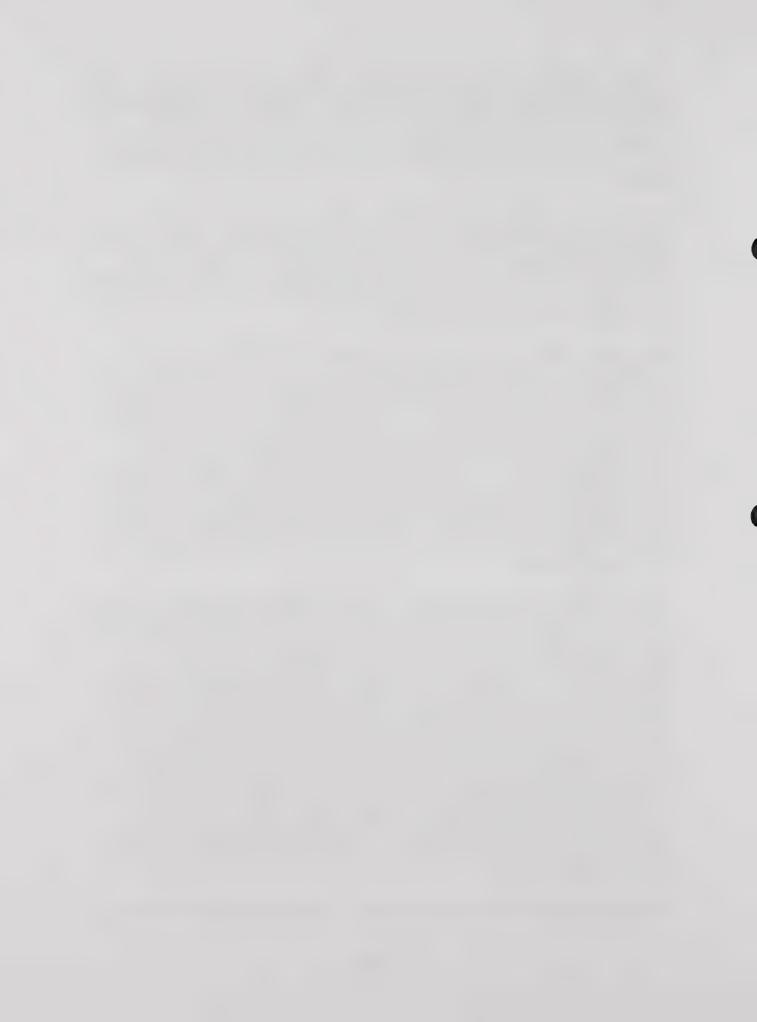
resource potential is limited to minerals primarily associated with San Diego Bay. These resources include bedrock, clay, sand, silts, and salt. In the past, clay has been utilized to manufacture brick; sand and silts have been used to rebuild ocean beaches. Salt extraction occurs within the salt ponds that are located at the southern boundary of the city. In addition to mineral extraction, these salt ponds provide habitat for sensitive bird species.

Open Space for Public Health and Safety includes areas that require special management or regulation because of hazardous or special conditions such as earthquake fault zones, unstable soil areas, and flood plains. National Flood Insurance Program maps prepared by the Federal Emergency Management Agency indicate that the beaches, the salt ponds, and a portion of the Municipal Golf Course are within special flood hazard areas that could be subject to flood inundation.

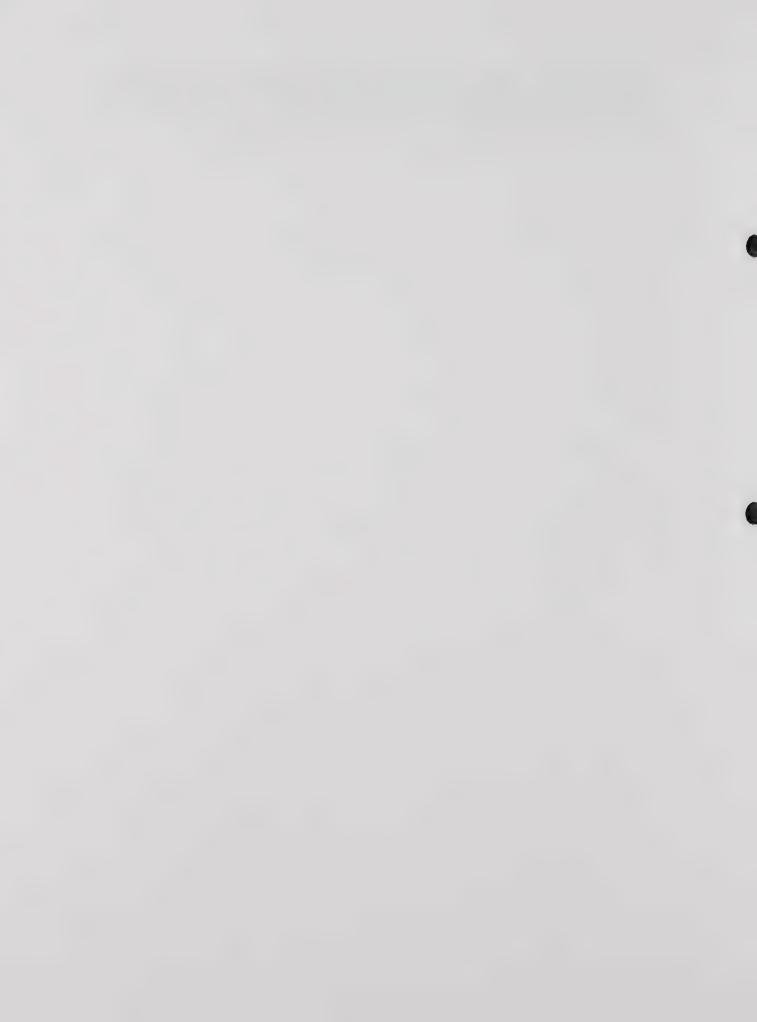
Historically, there has been little fault activity within the land area of Coronado. The seismicity of the San Diego/Coronado area (within a 75 km radius) has also been very low; since the 1800's only a small number of such events have occurred. ⁵ There are three sub parallel en echelon faults that have been identified within the area of Coronado, but have not been clearly delineated. They are the Spanish Bight Fault, the Coronado Fault, and the Silver Strand Fault. These three faults are thought to be southern extensions of the Rose Canyon Fault zone. Two of these faults, the Spanish Bight and Coronado Fault, run in a north-south pattern and lie under the village of Coronado as well as San Diego Bay. The Silver Strand fault also runs in a north-south direction and lies under portions of the Naval Amphibious Base. There is an additional fault trace that is believed to die out under the northwest end of the NAB. The displacement history of these faults is unknown. ⁵

Other major fault zones located within the San Diego region include the San Jacinto Fault zone and the Elsinore Fault zone. The Rose Canyon fault zone, as mentioned previously, parallels the Pacific coastline and should be considered active. The San Jacinto Fault zone is located approximately 75 miles away, is considered active, and has been estimated to have the capability of producing a maximum probable earthquake of 7.8 on the Richter scale. The Elsinore fault zone is located approximately 50 miles away, and has been estimated to have the capability to produce a probable maximum earthquake of 7.6 on the Richter scale. Possible earthquake related damage that could occur within Coronado could include ground shaking, liquefaction, differential settlement, lateral spreading, tsunamis, and seiches. Therefore, in order to reduce possible risks that could be imposed upon the public health, safety, and welfare, the undeveloped areas within the City that are susceptible to these hazards should, whenever possible remain as open space. If, however, in the future the land use designation was being considered to be changed, analysis and/or mitigation measures should occur as to the potential risk to human life and property.

For more detailed discussions regarding seismic or disaster preparedness issues, please



refer to Chapter K, the Public Safety and Seismic Safety Element, or Chapter J, the Disaster Preparedness Element of the General Plan, respectively. Moreover, flooding is also addressed in Chapter A, the Land Use Element of the General Plan.



Objectives And Policies of the Open Space Element

In order to preserve and enhance the City's existing Open Space areas, the City must first recognize the importance of open spaces to the residents and visitors of Coronado, and implement strategies that will enable open space preservation and enhancement. The following discussion provides objectives and policies to achieve the general goals outlined in the previous section.

A. Existing Conditions:

The City shall ensure the preservation and maintenance of existing open spaces including beaches, parks, the golf course, and bicycle/pedestrian paths. Promotion of these publicly owned open spaces for recreational purposes shall also be undertaken by the City. The City shall cooperate with other governmental agencies regarding efforts for preserving open spaces. Uses of open spaces that are detrimental to natural habitats will be discouraged.

B. Habitat Preserevation:

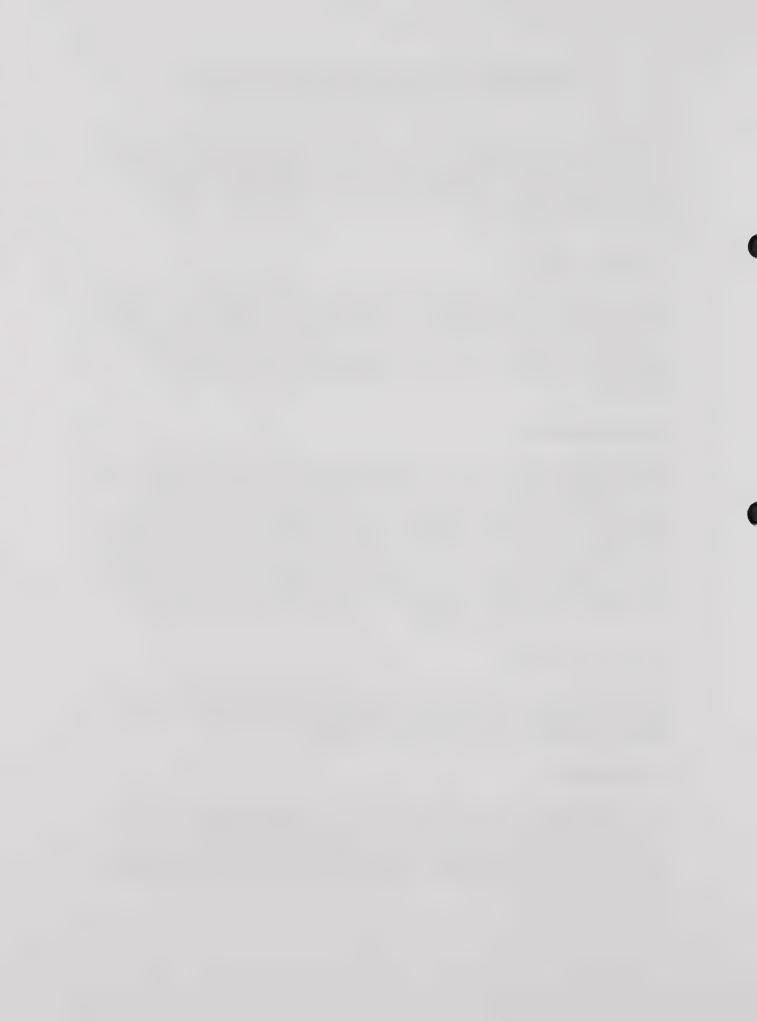
Sensitive biological habitats and wetlands that support rare or endangered species shall be preserved and conserved. This will require coordination with State and Federal agencies that have jurisdictions over such areas. The City shall also encourage the restoration and enhancement of degraded wetlands or habitats. Preservation efforts will be facilitated by Chapter 86.64 of the Municipal Code, the Wildlife Preservation Zone (Modifying Overlay Zone), which encourages the preservation and protection of valuable and unique environmental resources within the City. The City's Local Coastal Program and Chapter P of the General Plan, the Local Coastal Program Element, also support preservation of environmental resources.

C. Salt Pond Preservation:

The City recognizes the salt ponds as a valuable resource not only for salt evaporation purposes, but also for providing habitat for birds and marine wildlife; as such, the City supports the continuation of the salt extraction industry.

D. Water Quality:

The City advocates and supports improvement of the water quality of the ocean and bay. Aquaculture related development or activities shall only be permitted when environmental impacts are insignificant and are not detrimental to marine resources or habitats. Preservation of facilities that serve the sport and commercial fishing industries should be encouraged.



E. Public Safety

In order to protect public health and safety, the City shall regulate areas that are prone to seismic or flood hazards; when determined necessary, this may include preserving such areas as open space. Chapter K, the Public Safety and Seismic Safety Element, and Chapter J, the Disaster Preparedness Element of the General Plan, respectively, provide additional implementation measures that address such safety issues.

F. View Preservation:

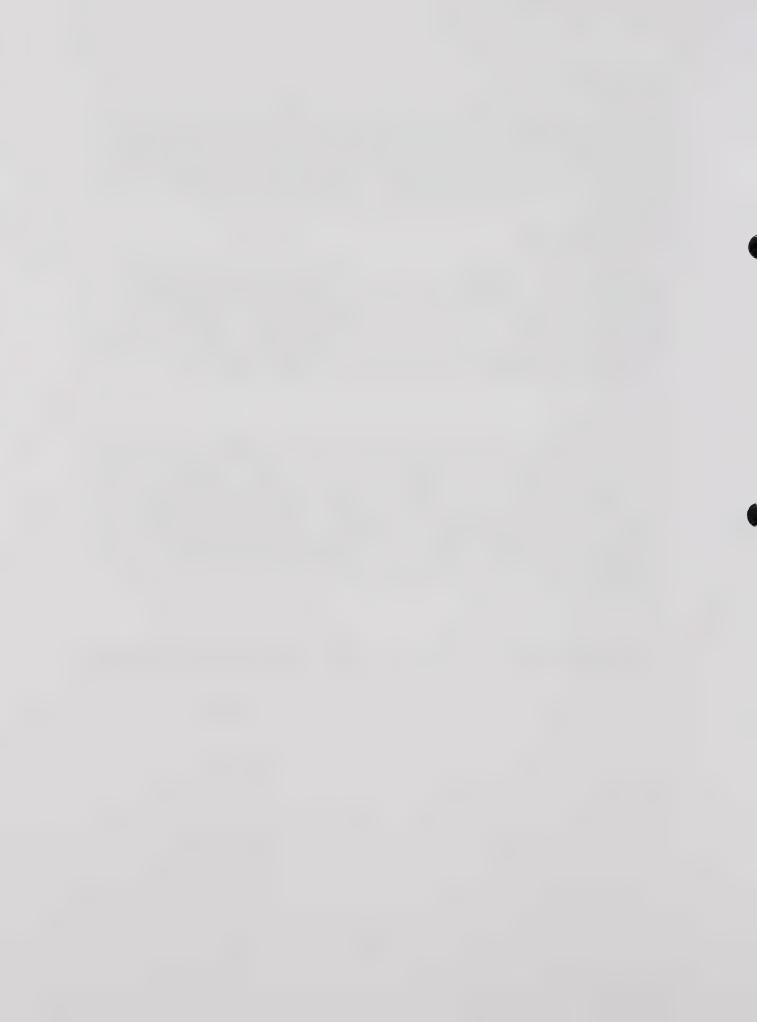
Because of their significant aesthetic and psychological values, the City encourages the preservation of scenic corridors and view sheds. When possible, the City shall, in coordination with Federal and State agencies and the private sector, also support the enhancement of scenic corridors and view sheds. Implementation of Chapter "O" of the General Plan, the Scenic Highway Element, as well as the design standards in Chapter "I" the Community Design Element facilitates scenic conservation as well.

G. Acquisition:

The developed nature of the "village" and the "Cays" renders acquisition of large parcels of land that could be used for open space difficult. However, the City shall remain alert and investigate any opportunities regarding acquisition of lands that could be maintained or preserved as open space. If publicly owned land - particularly located along the Silver Strand - should become available, the City shall assess the feasibility of acquiring such lands for the continued preservation of existing open spaces. Also, under such circumstances, the City shall determine practical financing methods that can be utilized for land acquisition.

H. Public Access:

When appropriate, the City shall facilitate and improve public access to open space areas.



Implementation Strategies

As previously discussed, the developed nature of the "village" and the "Cays" makes acquisition of lands that can be preserved for open spaces arduous. This is heightened by the scarcity and high costs associated with vacant land in Coronado. Therefore, as a method of increasing the capacity of the existing parklands to meet the demands of future population growth, the City shall continue to plan future park improvements, expansions, or new park locations. This shall include, when feasible and consistent with City and CALTRANS plans and policies, that the City investigate reducing existing street widths to create new or expanded pocket parks in the City's commercial areas. In addition, the City shall develop alternative programs that will facilitate open space recreational needs.

The City, however, shall remain alert for possible opportunities to acquire land that can be preserved, converted, or maintained for open space purposes. If such circumstances arise, the City shall determine the feasibility of the following financing methods for preservation and restoration of open spaces: general obligation bonds, special assessments, special taxes, tax increment financing, and solicitation of grants or donations from the private sector and/or other governmental agencies.

The City of Coronado has seven chapters within the Zoning Ordinance that provide regulations that directly assist in the preservation and protection of Open Space and natural resources. These ordinances are the Open Space Zone; Tidelands Overlay Zone; Scenic Highway Overlay Zone; Wildlife Preserve Zone (Modifying Overlay Zone); Diking, Dredging, Filling, and Dredge Spoils Disposal; Waterfront Development; and Protection of Natural Ocean and Bay Processes. The City shall continue implementation of these zoning ordinances and other regulatory measures that safeguard the community's open spaces, such as CEQA requirements and the Subdivision Map Act.

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- 5. Woodward-Clyde Consultants, <u>Preliminary Geotechnical Study Circulation Strategy</u> Feasibility Study, Coronado, California, September 1987.

